OFFICE OF
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Interior OIG Recognizes Contributions of Whistleblowers on National Whistleblower Appreciation Day

Today, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) Office of Inspector General (OIG) recognizes National Whistleblower Appreciation Day. This day occurs each year on July 30 to commemorate the significant contributions of whistleblowers throughout history.

DOI OIG relies on whistleblowers who come forward to report fraud, waste, and abuse, and Inspector General Mark Lee Greenblatt is recognizing National Whistleblower Appreciation Day by honoring two whistleblowers in particular for doing their part to identify misconduct and hold wrongdoers accountable:

- A DOI employee who notified the OIG of potential misconduct involving potential credit card fraud by Department employees on 14 different occasions between 2012 and 2021. Based on this whistleblower's disclosures, the OIG conducted several investigations that ultimately resulted in two resignations, one termination, two prosecutions, and the recovery of thousands of dollars. Beyond submitting important complaints, this whistleblower has also been an invaluable resource to the OIG, including by providing information that assisted our office in resolving numerous other investigations.

- A member of the public who reported a fraud scheme to the OIG involving a $9,000 Government contract in 2015. This complaint led the OIG to find over 50 victim subcontractors defrauded by the same contractor, who operated under at least dozen aliases/company names from 2009 through 2017. This disclosure ultimately led to the 2020 prosecution of the contractor, who was sentenced to 57 months in prison and ordered to pay over $3.7 million in restitution to victims. In addition, the whistleblower's assistance was critical in the suspension and debarment proceedings against the contractor that protect the Government and other subcontractors from future fraud.

"Whistleblowers are our eyes and ears in the Department and provide an invaluable service to the American public," said Inspector General Greenblatt. "Today we commend anyone who has spoken up when they saw something wrong and helped ensure effectiveness and accountability in Government programs and operations. It can take courage to do the right thing, but whistleblowers are the first line of defense against waste, fraud, and abuse."

Individuals who are aware of fraud, waste, abuse, or misconduct should contact the DOI OIG Hotline at www.doioig.gov/oig-hotline-forms. DOI OIG also has a Whistleblower Protection Coordinator, who is a resource for Department employees about the prohibitions against

whistleblower reprisal and the rights and remedies available to employees who experience retaliation for whistleblowing.

For more information visit our website at www.doioig.gov.